

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PHNOM 04705 011057Z

53

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 OMB-01 DRC-01 /150 W

----- 036930

R 010938Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5601

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

CONFIDENTIAL PHNOM PENH 4705

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PING CB

SUBJECT: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISSOLUTION OF THE HIGH POLITICAL
COUNCIL

REF: A. PHNOM PENH 4679

B. FBIS BANGKOK K 311420

1. PRESIDENT LON NOL ANNOUNCED LAST NIGHT (MARCH 31)
THE DISSOLUTION OF THE HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL (REF B).
HE EXPLAINED THAT THE COUNCIL WAS CREATED AT THE TIME
PARILAMENT GRANTED THE PRESIDENT SPECIAL POWERS AND
THAT PARLIAMENT'S RESUMPTION OF ITS NORMAL DUTIES
CONDEQUENTLY OBVIATES THE NEED FOR SUCH AN ORGAN.

2. IN FACT, THE COUNCIL WAS ABOLISHED IN ORDER TO
PAVE THE WAY FOR THE CREATION OF A NEW EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL CONSISTING OF THE PRESIDENT, FORMER HIGH
POLITICAL COUNCIL MEMBER SIRIK MATAK, PRIME MINSTER
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PHNOM 04705 011057Z

LONG BORET, AND FANK COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF MG SOSTHENE

FERNANDEZ. DECREES CREATING THIS BODY AND APPOINTING SIRIK MATAK HIGH ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT WILL BE PUBLISHED WITHIN TWO OR THREE DAYS, THE PRIME MINISTER TELLS US. THE PUBLIC RATIONALE GIVEN FOR THE COUNCIL'S DISSOLUTION AND THE DELAY IN ESTABLISHING THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WERE DESIGNED TO LESSEN THE POLITICAL BLOW TO THE FORMER COUNCIL'S VICE CHAIRMAN, CHENG HENG, WHO IS NOW EXCLUDED FROM THE HIGH POLICY LEVELS.

3. WE BELIEVE THE DECISION TO DISSOLVE THE HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL IS SOUND.

(A) JUSTIFIABLE SUSPICIONS THAT CHENG HENG WAS ASSOCIATED WITH FORMER PRIME MINSTER SON SANN'S ILL-ADVISED PEACE PROPOSALS HAD EFFECTIVELY ELIMINATED WHATEVER TRUST THE PRESIDENT AND SIRAK MATAK HAD PLACED IN HIM AND PREVENTED THE COUNCIL FROM FORTHRIGHTLY ADDRESSING IMPORTANT ISSUES.

(B) ALTHOUGH CHENG HENG OBVIOUSLY WILL NOT GO QUIETLY (REF B), HE DOES NOT HAVE THE PERSONAL STATURE OR FOLLOWING TO CAUSE SERIOUS POLITICAL TURBULENCE. THE RESIGNATIONS OF THE MINISTERS OF JUSTICE, HEALTH AND INDUSTRY, WHO WERE CHENG HENG'S APPOINTEES TO THE CABINET, WAS ENTIRELY EXPECTED AND SHOULD, IF ANYTHING, PERMIT STRENGTHENING OF THE GOVERNMENT.

(C) ON THE MINUS SIDE OF THE LEDGER, THE DISSOLUTION OF THE HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL COULD EXACERBATE PROBLEMS WITH PARLIAMENT. WHILE SIRIK MATAK MAY NOT RESENT THE PRESIDENT'S RESUMPTION OF ITS POWERS (AS LONG BORET HAS ASSURED US HE WOULD NOT), ANY MOVE BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND SENATE LEADERSHIPS TO PUT THESE WORDS INTO ACTION WILL UNDOUBTEDLY DRAW A REACTION FROM SIRIK MATAK AND THE REPUBLICANS.

4. THE NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL SHOULD BE A DECIDED IMPROVEMENT OVER THE POLITICAL COUNCIL. THE TALENTS OF SIRIK MATAK, WHO IS TO PREPARE THE AGENDA FOR THE COUNCIL'S WEEKLY MEETINGS, WILL BE MUCH BETTER UTILIZED. MORE IMPORTANT PERHAPS, THE INCLUSION OF

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PHNOM 04705 011057Z

LONG BORET AND SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ WILL PERMIT THE PRINCIPAL EXECUTORS OF GOVERNMENT POLICY TO PARTICIPATE MORE EFFECTIVELY IN ITS FORMULATION. THESE ADDITIONS TO THE GKR'S HIGHEST POLICY-MAKING LEVEL WILL, WE BELIEVE, MORE THAN COMPENSATE FOR THE RELATIVELY MINOR DAMAGE CHENG HENG'S DEPARTURE WILL DO TO THE GOVERNMENT'S IMAGE AS A BROAD-BASED COALITION.

DEAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REFORM, COALITION GOVERNMENT, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PHNOM04705
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740071-0657
From: PHNOM PENH
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740477/aaaacszp.tel
Line Count: 116
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. PHNOM PENH 4679
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISSOLUTION OF THE HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL
TAGS: PINS, CB
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005